



**Morning Alert - Wednesday, August 22, 2018**

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## HEADLINES

### Morning news

Most networks gave top play to reports on Typhoons Soulik and Cimaron, which are expected to bring heavy rains and strong winds to a wide area of Japan this week. TBS gave top play to a report on the final game of the National High School Baseball Championship at Koshien Stadium on Tuesday.

Major front-page stories in national papers included the results of the National High School Baseball Championship, an agreement reached between Japanese and Chinese manufacturers on standardizing specifications for electric vehicle battery chargers, and Prime Minister Abe's plan to officially announce on Sunday his candidacy in the September LDP presidential election.

## INTERNATIONAL

### IAEA expresses concern about North Korea's continued pursuit of nuclear development

Yomiuri, Asahi, and Mainichi wrote that the IAEA has issued an updated report on North Korea's nuclear development claiming that the Kim regime is still further advancing its nuclear weapons programs. The nuclear watchdog reportedly mentioned various developments pointing to Pyongyang's continued pursuit of nuclear expertise, such as the construction of a dam to store coolant for nuclear reactors and the operation of a facility at the nuclear reprocessing plant in Yongbyon earlier this year. The IAEA reportedly suspects that North Korea has continued to conduct nuclear activities following the first inter-Korean summit in April and the U.S.-DPRK summit in June at which Kim Jong Un pledged complete denuclearization.

## **Prime Minister Abe to visit Australia in the fall**

According to Nikkei, Prime Minister Abe is mulling a visit to Darwin, Australia, in November for talks with Prime Minister Turnbull when he attends the annual APEC leaders' meeting in Papua New Guinea on Nov. 17-18. The two premiers are expected to discuss measures to promote the "free and open Indo-Pacific" initiative. They are also reportedly aiming to forge a consensus on a "visiting forces agreement" for the two militaries. While in Darwin, the Japanese official is likely to attend a ceremony on the commencement of a local LNG development project involving a Japanese oil firm.

## **Several GOJ, ruling party officials planning trips to China**

Nikkei reported that Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Nogami will visit Beijing on Aug. 24 and 25, and LDP Secretary General Nikai will travel there separately next week. As Komeito Chief Representative Yamaguchi is also expected to visit the Chinese capital from Sept. 5 through 9, the daily speculated that the visits are intended to lay the groundwork for Prime Minister Abe's envisaged visit to China in October.

### **SECURITY**

## **ASDF's F-15s to be modernized**

Nikkei wrote that the Defense Ministry plans to upgrade the ASDF's F-15s starting in FY2019 to improve their ability to wage electronic warfare to neutralize enemy air defense systems and command, control, and communications networks. The fighter jets will be equipped with stealth capabilities and the ability to share with each other data on electronic warfare collected by other countries. The article stressed that the ASDF is lagging behind other countries in responding to potential electronic warfare.

## **MSDF to conduct joint drills with five Asian nations**

Asahi and Yomiuri reported that three Japanese warships and five military airplanes will depart for the Philippines, Singapore, Indonesia, India, and Sri Lanka starting on Aug. 26, noting that during the two-month tour through the end of October, they will conduct joint training with each of the local navies with the ultimate goal of curbing China's maritime advancement. The MSDF convoy is also expected to carry out training with the U.S. and other navies in Southeast Asia along the way.

## **Japan, Sri Lanka confirm defense cooperation**

Yomiuri reported from Colombo, Sri Lanka, that Defense Minister Onodera held talks with the Sri Lankan President Sirisena on Tuesday and agreed to strengthen security cooperation to ensure a "free and open" Indo-Pacific region with the goal of reining in China's growing presence in Southwest Asia. They also reportedly confirmed plans to hold joint training between their countries' navies.

## **Ginowan deputy mayor to run in mayoral election**

Mainichi wrote that Ginowan Deputy Mayor Matsukawa formally announced on Tuesday that he will run in the September by-election to pick the successor of Mayor Sakima, who resigned to seek the governorship. Matsukawa was asked by the former municipal chief's supporters to run in the Sept. 30 race.

### **ECONOMY**

## **Local automakers to shoulder 1.75 trillion yen in additional costs if U.S. imposes higher tariffs**

Nikkei took up an estimate produced by the Daiwa Institute of Research concerning the possibility of ad

ditional auto tariffs being imposed by the Trump administration, saying that the Japanese auto industry may have to shoulder as much as 1.75 trillion yen in additional costs if higher duties are imposed, including on autos and auto parts exported to the U.S. via Canada, Mexico, and other third countries. The daily also took up two separate estimates produced by other think tanks both pointing to the heavy financial burden Japanese companies may have to bear if President Trump imposes additional auto tariffs.

In a related development, Mainichi took up remarks made to the Wall Street Journal on Monday by Commerce Secretary Ross, who reportedly projected that his department probably will not be able to complete within this month its ongoing probe on whether or not automotive and auto component imports have had a negative impact on U.S. national security.

## AMBASSADOR

### **Ambassador Hagerty calls sports diplomacy a “home run”**

Asahi's website published an op-ed on sports diplomacy written by Ambassador Hagerty, who reportedly watched the final game of the summer National High School Baseball Championship at Koshien Stadium on Tuesday. The Ambassador wrote about his love of baseball; the success of a number of Japanese athletes at a global level, which he said has had a positive impact on perceptions of Japan worldwide; and the State Department's "Sports Envoys" program. Ambassador Hagerty also referred to the 2020 Olympics and Paralympics in Tokyo, highlighting the Embassy's "Go for Gold" program designed to deepen mutual understanding and strengthen people-to-people ties through discussions, sports clinics, English-language training programs, and events supporting study abroad. The Ambassador expressed hope that the fighting spirit and dedication that the young players displayed in the tournament will be replicated across the country, particularly among those helping to rebuild western Japan after the recent floods.

According to the website, the Ambassador separately recounted his impressions of the final game. He was quoted as saying: "I was moved by the players' dedication and the excitement at the stadium.... Just being here at the stadium, I was able to sense the significance of the tournament's 100-year history. I am convinced that it will continue without interruption for the next 100 years if we continue to pursue peace." Asahi published an abridged version of the Ambassador's impressions of the game in its morning edition.

## SCIENCE

### **GOJ to use whale meat normally disposed of to develop health food products**

Sankei reported that the Fisheries Agency plans to seek funding in the FY2019 budget to develop "functional food" that may have a positive effect on human health by using portions of whale meat that is normally disposed of in order to ensure the sustainable use of whales. By using all the by-products of scientific whaling, the agency is reportedly hoping to gain the support of the international community for its goal of resuming commercial whaling.

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